



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

505 CONSUMERS ROAD, SUITE 206, WILLOWDALE, ONTARIO M2J 4V8
Tel: 416-494-6040 Fax: 416-494-1530 Email: info@guyanaconsulate.com

For immediate release

Guyana Awards (Canada) 2009 Congratulations to the 2009 Guyana Awards Winners!

The Guyana Awards Council (Canada) is very pleased to announce the winners of the prestigious 2009 Guyana Awards (Canada, which will be presented at the **9th Guyana Awards Gala on Saturday, May 23, 2009** at the Inn On the Park, Centennial Ballroom, 1095 Leslie Street, Toronto, Ontario:

- **LEADERSHIP AWARD:**
MR. FAREED AMIN, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- **LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:**
MAYOR JOHN RODRIGUEZ, Mayor of the City of Greater Sudbury
- **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD:**
*DR. ANNE DIPCHAND, Associate Professor in Pediatrics, University of Toronto;
Staff Cardiologist, Hospital for Sick Children; Head of the Heart Transplant Program,
Hospital for Sick Children; Associate Director, SickKids Transplant Centre.*
- **SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:**
DR. JOHN FARLEY, Epidemiologist and Specialist in Infectious Diseases
- **BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARD:**
MR. CHRIS MOHAN, President/Owner, Maple Leaf Wheelchair Manufacturing Inc.
- **COMMUNITY SERVICE (INDIVIDUAL) AWARD:**
*MS. JOY SIMON, President, Guyanese Canadian Community Centre;
Vice-President, Alliance of Guyanese Canadian Organizations;
Founder/Owner, Bourda Green Nutrition*
- **MEDIA & CULTURE AWARD:**
MR. HARRY RAMKHELAWAN, INDO CARIBBEAN WORLD NEWSPAPER

An independent panel of eminent judges selected the 2009 Award recipients from the many nominations submitted. The panel was composed of the Honourable Justice Vibert Lampkin, retired Judge of the Ontario Court of Justice; Gale Lee, Program Manager for Asia and the Caribbean, CESO and former Acting Ambassador to Brussels; and Ken Singh, President, Atlas Cargo and member of the Advisory Council, York University.

The Guyana Awards (Canada) acknowledge the outstanding achievements of distinguished individuals and organizations in the Guyanese-Canadian community, and their sterling contributions toward the promotion and development of Guyana, Guyanese heritage and culture. The high calibre of this year's awardees will instill a greater sense of pride in the Guyanese-Canadian community and provide positive role models for our youth.



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The premier event in the Guyanese community in Toronto, this year's Guyana Awards Gala features **The Honourable Samuel A. Hinds, Prime Minister of Guyana, as the Guest Speaker**. Festivities commence at **6.00 p.m. on Saturday, May 23rd** with a Cocktail Reception, followed by dinner and presentation of the Awards, and culminating with dancing to the inimitable sounds of Victor Shim and The Surefire Band.

The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) has been selected as the "Charity of Choice" to receive the proceeds from the 2009 Guyana Awards Gala. Located in Toronto, SickKids is a world-renowned academic health science centre and is ranked as one of the top pediatric health-care facilities in the world. SickKids has improved the lives of children for more than 130 years. As a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto, the hospital's international academic reputation is well established. SickKids has a long-standing relationship with the Guyanese-Canadian community, having collaborated with several hospitals and not-for-profit organizations in Guyana and with local community groups in Toronto. Through programs such as the Herbie Fund, SickKids has assisted over 60 children from Guyana to improve their medical outcomes, as well as delivering pediatric health care to communities in Guyana.

The Guyana Awards Council invites you to celebrate with the "Who's Who" in the Guyanese and wider Toronto communities on **Saturday, May 23rd**. The Guyana Awards Gala is the official kick-off of the annual Guyana Independence Celebrations, initiating a host of events across Canada that culminates in the 3-day Guyana Festival from June 20-22.

Tickets are available at \$100 per person and may also be purchased by tables of ten. For information and tickets, contact Felicia Kwang, Guyana Consulate, 416-494-6040 X23, or Bert Bacchus at 905-770-3785.

For further information, please contact:

Danny Doobay, Honorary Consul General, Guyana Consulate, 416-494-6040 X29
Nancy Rickford, Vice-Chair Public Relations, Guyana Awards Council (Canada), 416-449-4453

April 26, 2009

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE 2009 GUYANA AWARDS RECIPIENTS FOLLOW:



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LEADERSHIP AWARD:

MR. FAREED AMIN, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

After 20 years in the Ontario Public Service, Fareed Amin was appointed Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing effective December 8, 2008. He had previously served as Deputy Minister in five ministries or portfolios, including Citizenship and Immigration; Intergovernmental Affairs; Small Business and Entrepreneurship; and as Deputy Minister responsible for Seniors and for Women's Issues.

Prior to his recent appointment, Mr. Amin was Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of International Trade and Investment, where he guided the conception, development and implementation of an ambitious \$1.15 billion program designed to foster innovative businesses and create well-paying, sustainable jobs. The program supports the establishment of 'green' products, efficient technologies, health cures and treatments, and is unique in that it provides companies and businesses with a single point of contact and a service delivery guarantee. These improvements have re-defined how government works with the business community to optimize prosperity-enhancing ideas and innovation.

While Deputy City Manager for the City of Toronto, Fareed Amin was responsible for corporate oversight, administrative governance, and co-ordinating the collective expertise on major city-wide initiatives and projects. His portfolio at the City included Building, City Planning, and the Waterfront Secretariat.

Mr. Amin has a Masters of Public Administration from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, a Certificate in Public Administration from the University of Toronto, and an undergraduate degree in Applied Geography and Planning from the University of Guyana. He is President of the Islamic Institute of Toronto, and is married with three children.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:

HON. JOHN RODRIGUEZ, Mayor of the City of Greater Sudbury, Ontario

John Rodriguez received his elementary and high school education in Guyana and emigrated to Canada in 1956. After attending Teachers' College in Toronto, he began his teaching career in St. Catharines, Ontario and moved to the Town of Coniston in 1962 where he assumed the role of Principal of St. Paul School. His leadership abilities and passion for community eventually led him to political life, first as a Member of Municipal Council in Coniston and later as Member of Parliament for the riding of Nickel Belt.

During his 18 years in federal politics, Mr. Rodriguez worked to improve the economic well-being of the Sudbury area and the quality of life of its citizens. A vibrant and respected politician, he served on numerous Standing Committees, including: Finance; Trade and Economic Affairs; Labour; Employment and Immigration; Regional Development; Indian Affairs and Northern Development; Single Industry Communities and Regional Economic Expansion.

In 2006, John Rodriguez re-entered the local political arena when he was elected Mayor of the City of Greater Sudbury—an office that oversees the trillion-dollar Sudbury Basin, the richest mining district in North America. A strong advocate for community growth and development, he has worked diligently to shape the community's strategy for growth in areas such as mining and mining research, health care, arts and culture, and recreation.

Mayor Rodriguez is a former member of the Board of Governors of the Ontario Teachers' Federation, past President of both the local and provincial Catholic Teachers' Unions, and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English and Spanish Literature from Laurentian University. A long-time volleyball coach, he and his wife, Bertilla, have five sons and five grandchildren.



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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD:

DR. ANNE DIPCHAND, Associate Professor in Pediatrics, University of Toronto; Staff Cardiologist, Hospital for Sick Children; Head of the Heart Transplant Program, Hospital for Sick Children; Associate Director of the SickKids Transplant Centre.

A world leader and internationally recognized authority in pediatrics, cardiology and heart transplants, Dr. Anne Dipchand began her quest for academic excellence early, winning numerous scholarships in high school and university. While in high school, she decided to pursue science and left Halifax for medical school in Toronto. She won an entrance scholarship to the University of Toronto Medical School and, on graduation, won the Cody Gold Medal for the highest academic standing in medical school. Dr. Dipchand chose Cardiology because of its challenge, and has received many teaching awards and national and international recognition for her work.

An Associate Professor in Pediatrics at the University of Toronto and Staff Cardiologist at the Hospital for Sick Children, Dr. Dipchand is currently Head of the Heart Transplant Program at SickKids, which performs the largest number of heart and heart/lung transplants in Canada, and Associate Director of the SickKids Transplant Centre. The recipient of many research grants, she is now the Vice-President and President Elect of the Pediatric Heart Transplant Study. Dr. Dipchand is the author or co-author of two books, nine book chapters, 99 abstracts, and over 100 invited lectures and presentations.

A tireless advocate of and contributor to child health in Canada and around the world, Dr. Dipchand is Chair of the Canadian Society of Transplantation Education Committee, and Co-Chair of the Pediatric Committees of the International Society of Heart and Lung Transplantation and a Councillor on the Board of the International Pediatric Transplant Association.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:

DR. JOHN FARLEY, Epidemiologist and Specialist in Infectious Diseases

Born in Rose Hall Town, Corentyne, Berbice, Dr. John Farley received his undergraduate degree in Biology (Hons) from the University of Waterloo in 1974; his MBBS from the University of Lagos, Nigeria in 1979; did specialty training in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases at the University of Alberta in 1984; then went on to train as an Epidemiologist through the Health Canada Field Epidemiology Program.

Dr. Farley has had a distinguished career in medicine and communicable diseases control, with many publications in peer reviewed journals, and is a clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of British Columbia. In 1987, as Provincial Epidemiologist at the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, he spearheaded a campaign to have all Grade 6 students in the province vaccinated for Hepatitis B, which led to the Universal Hepatitis B Vaccine Program in the province.

In 1990, because of his desire to give back to his region, Dr. Farley took up a position in the Caribbean as Head of a special project on HIV/AIDS with the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization, where he used his expertise in Epidemiology to assist local authorities to control the spread of HIV throughout the Caribbean and Guyana. He subsequently held the post of Chief of Surveillance for HIV/AIDS at the Bureau of HIV/AIDS, Ottawa, where he was responsible for setting up a Canada-wide electronic based surveillance system for HIV/AIDS. Dr. Farley was also one of the doctors involved in controlling the 1998 SARS outbreak in Canada.



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Dr. Farley now has his own busy Medical Clinics in Vancouver and Abbotsford, British Columbia, where he treats mainly infectious diseases such as Hepatitis B and C and HIV/AIDS. For the past eight years, he has done tremendous work as the Infectious Diseases Consultant for Corrections Canada in the Pacific Region, treating and raising awareness and prevention of Hepatitis B and C and co-infection with HIV/AIDS.

His dedication to the people of Guyana was demonstrated when, through the Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH), he travelled to and from Guyana to assist in an HIV control program and assisted in enhancing the Diseases Surveillance System at the Ministry of Health.

Married, with a nine-year-old son, Dr. Farley is a Founding Member and the First President of the Guyanese Canadian Cultural Association of B.C.

BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARD

MR. CHRIS MOHAN, President/Owner, Maple Leaf Wheelchair Manufacturing Inc.

Chris Mohan emigrated to Canada in the 1980s with little money in his pocket but with a burning desire to build a good life in his new home. He and his family worked for some time with Canadian Wheelchair, where Chris was instrumental in developing new products for the company. After the firm was sold to an American company, throwing the Mohans out of work, Chris—with the help of his mother, brothers and sister—set up his own business making and testing wheelchair prototypes in the basement of his home. On May 15, 1993 Maple Leaf Wheelchair Manufacturing Inc.—Canada's only wheelchair manufacturer—was established.

Today, Maple Leaf Wheelchair employs more than 50 people and boasts annual sales in excess of \$8 million. The company has become an icon in the manufacture of equipment to meet the needs of people with disabilities and seniors requiring assistance, from wheelchairs, recliners and geriatric chairs, to tilts, commodes and walkers.

Mr. Mohan has served for many years as Director, Vice-Chair and Treasurer of the Canadian Assistive Devices Association (CADA). For the past 15 years Maple Leaf Wheelchair has consistently supported many community organizations in Toronto, Guyana and the Caribbean, including Three Rivers Kids Foundation and The Caribbean Children Foundation.

COMMUNITY SERVICE (INDIVIDUAL) AWARD:

MRS. JOY SIMON, President, Guyanese Canadian Community Centre; Vice-President, Alliance of Guyanese Canadian Organizations; Founder/Owner, Bourda Green Nutrition

A former Elementary School Teacher, Child and Youth Advocate and Counsellor, Joy Simon embraces the concept of giving back to her community and has been doing so for over 20 years, promoting educational, spiritual and cultural growth in the many communities in which she has worked.

Mrs. Simon is President of the Guyanese Canadian Community Centre; Vice-President of the Alliance of Guyanese Canadian Organizations (AGCO); Executive Board Member of the Guyana Ex-Police Association of Canada; Chapter President of the Scarborough North Spelling Bee of Canada; and Vice-President and Fund Raising Director of Malvern Onyx Lions Club. A York University Psychology graduate, she is a member of the Toronto District School Board Safe Schools Work Group, which deals with issues such as confrontational and cyber bullying, cultural competence, reviewing alternatives to suspension, denial of access (procedure and clarification), and more.



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For the past five years Mrs. Simon has been facilitating the Saturday Mentoring Program for AGCO along with a team of qualified teachers, educators and volunteers. This program provides additional educational assistance to youth from 5-18 years of age.

Joy Simon is also a Life Member on the Board of the Catholic Children's Aid Society where she does volunteer work with child abuse agencies in and around the GTA, counselling abused women, mentoring young teenaged mothers in areas such as crisis intervention, single families in crisis, and at-risk youths. She conducts workshops in parenting skills, anger management, job skills, and personal grooming.

A grassroots community leader with a passion for guiding and nurturing young people to reach their full potential, Joy Simon is the proud mother of three children and the Founder/Owner of Bourda Green Nutrition.

MEDIA & CULTURE AWARD:

MR. HARRY RAMKHELAWAN, INDO CARIBBEAN WORLD NEWSPAPER

Harry Ramkhelawan—Founder, Publisher and Editor of *Indo-Caribbean World* (ICW)—is a pioneer of the Guyanese and Caribbean print media in Toronto. For the last 26 years *Indo-Caribbean World* has made a significant and permanent contribution to the history and development of ethnic journalism and multiculturalism in Canada by providing an important voice for immigrants from Guyana and the Caribbean. ICW has also kept the diaspora informed of developments in Guyana and the Caribbean through articles and thoughtful analysis on politics, religion, culture, economics, music, entertainment and sports.

A practicing Hindu priest and a dedicated member of the Hindu community in Toronto, Mr. Ramkhelawan is also a talented Indian musician and music teacher. His ability to spot talent has helped many aspiring musicians to achieve their full potential.

Mr. Ramkhelawan has quietly inspired and supported many charitable organizations, and is an ardent promoter of Guyanese causes and a key supporter of Guyanese businesses.

Harry Ramkhelawan is a graduate of the University of Guyana with a B.A. in English.